

i wanna know what love is by titasjournal

Category: Star Wars - All Media Types, Star Wars Original Trilogy, Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Mileven, and mentions jonathan x nancy, but also a lil bit of lucas x max, set post-season 2, this one is centered more in mileven

Language: English

Characters: Dustin Henderson, Eleven (Stranger Things), Han Solo, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Leia Organa, Lucas Sinclair, Max (Stranger Things), Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Will Byers

Relationships: Eleven & Mike Wheeler, Eleven/Mike Wheeler, Leia Organa/Han Solo, Max/Lucas Sinclair, Will Byers & Eleven & Dustin Henderson & Lucas Sinclair & Mike Wheeler

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Summary:

In which the gang has a sleepover at Mike's and watching the empire strikes back makes Eleven wonder just what love is supposed to be. set after the events of season 2.

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Author's Note:

this is a short and sweet lil one-shot full of innocence and mileven fluff. hope you enjoy!

i do not own stranger things or its characters.

Chief Hopper walks Eleven up the Wheeler's driveway and rings the bell. Mike opens the door point two seconds after it rings:

"Hello, sir," the boy greets, instantaneously straightening his posture.

"No funny business, kid," Hopper warns. Then, he turns towards Eleven and says: "I'll pick you up tomorrow at nine AM sharp." She looks up and nods, impatient to hug Mike. "Have fun," he finally smiles, ruffling her hair.

As soon as Hopper takes a step away from the kids, Eleven throws herself to Mike, dropping her sleeping bag on the ground with a loud *clank*. His arms envelop her in a warm hug, inhaling her scent.

"I missed you, El," he breaths into her slightly longer curls as she grips him tight, tight, *tighter* . Then, behind them, Dustin calls:

"Come on, guys," they keep hugging in the hallway through Dustin's pleas. "Star Wars waits for nobody!"

"We should go," Mike coaxes El to let go, promptly reaching for her hand as they go down the steps to the basement.

There, against the wall, the kids, with the much needed help of Jonathan and Nancy, put the tv. Directly in front of it is a small couch, their makeshift cocoon, complete with embroidered pillows and thick, warm blankets. Lucas and Max are already occupying most of it, consciously sitting not too far away, yet not too close either. Will is sitting on a long, plush pillow closer to the tv set, attempting to put on the tape.

"I'll help," Mike offers, letting go of El's hand. A couple of months

ago, or maybe even a few weeks, that simple gesture (or lack thereof) would've made her maniac, panicky and feeling unsafe. After 353 days of strictly no contact with Mike, her life boat, every moment or the smallest hint of an interaction made her feel a way she couldn't quite compare to anything in her life before the boys and Max. Now, however, she was beginning to adjust. She knew he'd be holding her hand a few moments later anyway.

"Where's the popcorn?" Dustin asks frantically, seeing as though the signature opening music was just starting to play. "For the love of God, who has the popcorn?!"

"Here, dude," Lucas calls as Dustin plops on the couch beside him and Max. "Now shut up." the boy leans forward as the opening crawl appears.

The bold yellow letters pop out at Eleven. *The Empire Strikes Back*, it reads. She tugs on Mike's pajama sleeve and whispers: "What does *strike* mean?"

"It means *to fight back*," he murmurs into her ear, her chestnut curls tickling his nose. "Like we did with the Demogorgon." she smiles knowingly, settling on the ground, against the couch, comfortably sitting on a pillow. Mike cautiously drapes a big, blue blanket on top of them, so as to cover most of El's body as possible. When he asks:

"You're not cold, are you?" she shakes her head reassuringly. The way her head fits just so below his neck, her cheek resting on his chest, is uncanny.

The movie carries on smoothly: Dustin only screams a handful of times, Will has a lot of fun explaining random trivia to El (this being the first time she watches the movie and all) and Lucas *almost* puts his arm around Max (and she almost lets him).

Then, Han Solo is captured by Darth Vader on-screen and is forced into carbonite. The whole gang's demeanor changes even though Eleven's the only one who doesn't know what's about to happen. She feels Mike's grip on her tighten, *instinct*, so she makes sure to pay extra attention (because, if she were being honest, she probably spent a fourth of the movie looking at Mike's freckles).

"I love you," the ever-courageous Princess Leia confesses in the climax of the film. Even Max can't help but sigh. Eleven's heard some people say it: *love*, especially on tv, though she's never had the guts to ask anyone what it really meant. She could sort of guess: it was something along the lines of *like*, how she felt about Eggos! (or maybe even how she felt about Mike...). She knew you're always supposed to say it back: *I love you too*, so, when the smuggler shoots back an emotional: *I know*, El is left to her own devices to figure that one out.

"Best fucking line of the movie, man," Dustin says. The gang nods in agreement, much to Eleven's dismay. *Wasn't he supposed to say it back?!*

"Are we gonna watch *Return of the Jedi* now?" Will chimes in, leaning forward to lower the volume of the tv.

"Not to be a party pooper, but I'm almost falling asleep here," Lucas says, yawning exaggeratedly, and Max nods in agreement.

Then, seeing Will's expression of disappointment, Max promises: "We'll watch it tomorrow."

El lowers her eyes to the ground: *I won't watch it with them.*

Mike nudges her arm softly: "We'll watch it on Wednesday when I come and visit you."

El's eyes light up at his thoughtfulness. A small grin starts on his full lips and travels onto her own, thinner ones. "Thank you," she shyly murmurs.

"You're welcome." He replies. They hover there for a second, not really knowing what to do next. Before either of their smiles has time to fade, the moment is lost:

"You guys gettin' up or what?" Dustin shouts. "Don't think we're setting up your sleeping bags!" the boy's voice is slightly muffled towards the end, thanks to the thick material of his sleeping bag.

Mike starts to get up, shoving a mouthful of the remainders of popcorn. El follows him to their fort, still intact after all the craziness

of the previous year.

They lay side by side, not touching (maybe just barely). Max thankfully turns off the basement's light, shadowing El's blushed cheeks.

Mike lays very still on his back, eyes drilling a hole on the sheets covering the top of the fort. Eleven is faced sideways, towards him, waiting for him to speak or for slumber to come and take her away, whatever came first.

Why won't he turn his face? Her entire being is screaming at him: *look at me, look at me, look at me.*

"Mike," El gives in, finally.

"Yeah?" Mike *still* won't turn his face towards her.

"Can you explain something to me?" she says the words carefully, one at a time.

"Sure." his eyes flutter closed.

"Why didn't the man say *I love you* back?" the word rolls off her tongue surprisingly easily. She liked how it felt to say it out loud instead of having go on a merry-go-round in her mind.

"Han Solo?" *now* Mike turns on his side.

"Aham," El nods slowly.

"Well," the boy starts, wrinkling his nose. "I think it he wanted to assure the princess that he would come back and, in case he didn't, that he knew how she felt."

"How she felt?" Mike feels Eleven's breath on his face, warm and sweet.

"She loves him," at the sound of the expression they both freeze.

"How does she..." She cuts herself off, tugging on her blanket so as to cover most of her body. "How does she *know*?"

Mike's eyes widen: he was not expecting a question Mike himself didn't even have an answer to. He tries though, because he would regret nothing more than to disappoint El.

"Maybe, when she's alone at night, right before falling asleep, he's the one she thinks about. When someone says something funny, the princess only thinks about telling Han." Mike tries. "You know when you wait the whole year for that perfect summer day, when the sun is shining especially bright and mom lets me come home from the lake later than other days?"

Eleven nods, expectant.

"Well, maybe, the princess only wants to share that day with Han."

"Like when I only share my Eggos with you?" El smiles.

"Yes, like that." Mike smiles too, his unruly dark curls brushing on her forehead.

"Do I, hum, love you?" She hesitates.

"I don't know." her smile fades. "Do you feel it?"

"I," she tries, but hesitates. "I'm not sure."

"It's okay if you don't know yet." Mike smiles tenderly, his fingers searching hers underneath the covers. Once he finds them, hot against his skin, he grips the reassuringly, almost whispering: *I know* .